NOTE XXXVI.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER ADDRESSED TO D^R. F. A. JENTINK

BY

Mr. J. D. PASTEUR,

dated Padang Sidempoean, July 1st 1890.

»I take advantage of this opportunity to send you a small box containing a piece of a telegraph pole (of djatiwood, *Tectona grandis*) with two Wood-peckers, *Picus analis*, from Java, Kediri Residency. These birds make, as you see, rather large holes in the teakwood, which is as hard as iron, near the point where the isolator has been attached: apparently because they mistake the well known buzzing of the quavering wire-threads of the telegraph for the gnawing and boring of Insects.

I should not have mentioned this fact if it was not such a great rarity. For on the Paris electricity exhibition in 1881 there was to be seen as a great rarity a telegraph pole perforated through and through by a hole having a diameter of 7 centimeters: this remarkable pole was sent by the Director of the Norway telegraphs. The administration for a long time was uncertain to what cause ascribe this damage done to poles which for the rest were entirely sound, till at last by a mere chance the Wood-peckers were seen at work.

In Norway too has been observed another not less remarkable damage caused to telegraph poles and also for a long time inexplicable. The large stones which are heaped up at the base of the telegraph poles in order to increase their solidity sometimes were found removed and dispersed. Finally it was observed that this damage was caused by Bears, which apparently mistoke the mysterious noise in the poles for the buzzing of a swarm of bees.

In my quality of Inspector of the post- and telegraphic service I inspected thousands of telegraph poles, but only in a few cases I could state the damage caused by Wood-peckers and then always on the living kapok-trees *(Eriodendron anfractuosum)* which are used here for this purpose. The piece of telegraph pole sent to you is the only example known to me that the Wood-peckers extend their damage to the sound and very hard poles of djatiwood. Besides the above mentioned Wood-pecker we saw from time to time the rare little *Picus moluccensis* at work among the other ones."